



The Criterion in Explaining the Issues of Imaan

Introduction

All Praise is due to Allaah, we praise Him, seek His aid and His Forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allaah from the evils of our souls and the evils of our actions. Whomsoever Allaah guides there is none to misguide and whomsoever Allaah misguides there is none to guide. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allaah, alone, without any partners and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger.

To proceed:

This is a serialisation of the cassette lecture of the noble shaikh, Abul-Hasan al-Misri, related to the issues of Imaan delivered last year in Ma'rab, entitled "Al-Furqaan Fee Bayaan Masaa'il il-Imaan". The gathering was recorded on two cassettes and discusses the emergence of a new sect who has deviated on the issues of Imaan. A sect called "Firqah Jins ul-Amal", the main doctrinal work in this regard being that of the unfortunate doctor in aqidah who revived the doctrine of the Mansoori Kharijites, accused the whole Ummah of Irjaa', alongside its notable Imaams and Mashaayikh.

Due to the great benefit in these cassettes, we have deemed it befitting that the contents be serialised into easy to follow lessons, such that the Sunni, Salafi, Athari, the seeker of knowledge, guidance and success may be able to tread carefully in these issues and to be aware of the great deviation and heresies entered into the ranks of Ahl us-Sunnah by the Qutubiyah, Surooriyyah ["Khaarijiyyah 'Asriyyah"], may Allaah sever them and end their evil at the hands of Ahl us-Sunnah and by the Jihaad of the tongue and pen.

Before you, Noble Reader, is the fourth lesson: "Each Of The Components of Imaan Has Roots, (Usool) And Branches (Furoo'), and the Latter Consists Of Obligations (Waajibaat) and Recommendations (Mustahabbaat)".

Lesson 4: Each Of The Components of Imaan Has Roots, (Usool) And Branches (Furoo'), and the Latter Consists Of Obligations (Waajibaat) and Recommendations (Mustahabbaat)

Shaikh Abul-Hasan al-Misri – hafidhahullaah – said:

1. It is said to those, that all of the Murji'ah are in agreement that a person is complete and perfect in his Imaan, regardless of whatever actions he committed, and this is textually stated by Shaikh ul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah, Sufyaan Ibn Uyainah before him and also others from the People of Knowledge.

2. When we have understood that Imaan is the speech of the heart and tongue and the actions of the heart and limbs, then whoever brings all of these affairs (in their totality), then he is a Believer, perfect in his Imaan.

3. And these things, which you have heard, the speech of the heart and tongue, and the actions of the heart and limbs, then they have **Usool** (foundations, roots), and they also have **Furoo'** (branches). Amongst these matters (i.e. the speech of the heart and tongue, and the actions of the hearts and limbs) are those things which if left are kufr (i.e. the usool, foundations) and there are also those things which if left are disobedience (i.e. the **waajibaat**, obligations, from amongst the furoo') and also those things which if left are neither kufr and nor disobedience (i.e. the **mustahabbaat**, recommendations amongst the furoo'), but rather they cause a mere deficiency in perfection (of Imaan).

4. Hence, the actions of the heart have usool (foundations), and they also have waajibaat (obligations) and also mustahabbaat (recommendations) and nawaafil (voluntary rewarded actions). And the speech of the tongue has usool, and waajibaat and mustahabbaat. Likewise the actions of the limbs have usool, waajibaat and mustahabbaat

5. Whoever left an asl (root, foundation), regardless of whether it is related to the heart, or the tongue or the outward actions of the limbs becomes a disbeliever based upon the finer details well-known to the People of Knowledge in making takfir of a specific individual. I am speaking here in general terms and hence any generalisations should be referred back to the well-known tafseel (detail) in the principle of the presence of the conditions (for takfir) and the removal of the barriers.

6. So I say, that these three things also, the heart itself, the tongue itself and the limbs, also have waajibaat (i.e. not just usool, but also what is less than that), the one who leaves them is sinful, and his Imaan decreases, and he will be subject to punishment, and his affair is with Allaah, if He wills He will punish him and if He wills He will forgive Him.

7. An example of that, if were to look at hubb (love) in the heart, that is love of Allaah and love of His way and path, and love of the Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam), and this love also requires that we love those who call to Allaah and those who direct us to Allaah the Mighty and Majestic. All of this has an asl (root, foundation), waajibaat (obligations),

mustahabbaat (recommendations) and nawaafil (rewarded voluntary actions). So whoever left and abandoned love of Allaah, such that a man does not love Allaah and does not love His way, then he is a disbeliever. If he does not love the Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) then he is a disbeliever. Then as for the one who loves Allaah, but alongside this love of Allaah, the love of other others enters into his heart, such as a friend in front of whom he feels shame, or a person who has strength or the ability to benefit (materially and otherwise), and as a result of the love of such a one, a person falls short in some of that which Allaah has obligated upon him, then such a person has the asl (root, foundation) of love, however he does not have some of the waajibaat (obligations) of love. Then another person, one who loves Allaah and His Messenger, and Allaah's way, and he does not put the words of anybody else in front of the words of Allaah or the words of the Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam), however he does not love the Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) more than he loves his own self. Then this is a deficiency in the nawaafil (rewarded voluntary actions) of Imaan. Such a one does not become a disbeliever on account of this, and nor is he sinful (fisq). 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab, when the Prophet (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) said, "None of you truly believes until I become more beloved to him than his wealth, his sons, his fathers, his own self, and the whole of mankind" replied, "O Messenger of Allaah, you are more beloved to me than all of this, except my own self. As for my own self, then no". And so he replied, "You have not ceased O 'Umar". So what has he not ceased being? Is it to be said that you have not ceased to be a disbeliever? Is it said that you have not ceased to be a sinner (faasiq)? No, this it is said, you have not ceased to have not reached the highest level or rank, and even though you are a Believer with perfection in your faith (Imaan), then you have not reached the highest level.

8. This is because perfection (at-tamaam) is also of two types: perfection of the obligatory duties (tamaam ul-waajibaat) and perfection of the recommended duties (tamaamul-mustahabbaat). And this is mentioned by Shaikh ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah quite frequently. Hence, it is necessary to distinguish between the obligatory perfection (al-kamaal al-waajib), and the recommended perfection (al-kamaal al-mustahabb).

9. The one who commits zinaa (fornication, adultery) then he has lost perfection, but which perfection? The obligatory or recommended perfection? He has lost the obligatory perfection (al-kamaal al-waajib). The one who steals has lost the obligatory perfection. The one who does not pray the Sunnah of the Duhaa (Forenoon) prayer, then he has lost perfection in his Imaan. But which perfection? The recommended perfection (al-kamaal al-mustahabb). Hence, we hold that there is the obligatory perfection (al-kamaal ul-waajib) and the recommended perfection (al-kamaal al-mustahabb).

10. And speech¹ has usool, waajibaat, and mustabbaat. Someone might say, what are the usool (foundations) for the saying "I testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allaah alone and that Muhammad is His Messenger". The Ulamaa are unanimously agreed that whoever does not affirm the two testimonies (shahaadatayn) and he is able to do that (on his tongue) then he is a disbeliever. Even if he says, "I am a believer with my heart". A

¹ And the speech being referred to here is not "the speech of the tongue" in the sense of uttering the shahaadah, but speech in general, that is any speech.

man who is not compelled, he is not dumb and he has no other defects in his speech or in his tongue, and he is under no compulsion, yet alongside that he says “That inside I affirm that which you speak with, but I do not say it”, then such a one is a disbeliever, and this is an original disbeliever, who has not originally entered Islaam. So this is an *asl*, root or foundation. Sometimes, it can be an obligation from amongst the variety of obligations. Sometimes it can be from amongst the words used to enjoin the good and forbid the evil. So when we speak to a sinful person, then this is speech is it not. This is from the obligations of Imaan, and from the obligations of speech. So if a person was not to say this (i.e. to forbid someone from evil), then he would not become a disbeliever on account of it, rather he would have a deficiency in the obligations of speech. And as for the *mustahabbaat* in speech, then it the likes of *tasbeeh*, *tahleel*, *takbeer*, *istighfaar* and other such things, which is also the *nawaafil* (the obligatory rewarded duties). Hence, there is also *usool*, *furoo* in one’s speech. The *furoo*’ (branches) are the *waajibaat* (obligations) and the *mustabbaat* (recommended actions) are the *nawaafil*.

11. Similarly, with respect to the actions of the limbs, amongst them are matters that are *usool* (foundations, roots), those that are *waajibaat* (obligations) and those that are recommended (*mustahabbaat*). What is an example of the foundations? Shaikh ul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah gives an example of this when he says that when you see a man kicking the Qur’aan with his foot, is it not obligatory upon you to prevent him. This is actually *Shirk* and it is obligatory upon you prevent him and to repel him. Or for example – and this is not applicable to our times – if a man in the time of the Prophet (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) attempted to kill the Prophet (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam), and a person was watching and looking, having the capability to repel him and to prevent him, it is obligatory upon him, from the point of view of the root and foundation (of Imaan), that he should repel this harm from the Prophet (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam). If you were watching a man attempting to kill the Prophet (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) and your intervening would entail the safety of the Prophet (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) in this instance, and then you left him do that, then Shaikh ul-Islaam says concerning this example that he illustrated that this is *kufr*, disbelief. And this is an action². We also have the example of the abandonment of prayer, and there is the well-known difference of opinion on this issue amongst the Scholars. So whoever, considers it to be disbelief, then he treats the prayer as being from *usool* (foundations) of action, and whoever does not consider it to be disbelief, then he treats the prayer as being from the *waajibaat* (obligations). Then we also have the *mustahabbaat* (in actions) and this only too well-known to be discussed. There are *mustahabb* actions in righteousness (*birr*), in good dealings with the people (*mu’aamalah*), in brotherhood, in the prayer itself, in fasting, in Hajj, in charity and so on.

12. So all of this is clear to us, that the Imaan in each of the speech, action and the heart, then it has *usool* (foundations) which necessitate disbelief, there are *usool* whose abandonment necessitates disbelief, there are also obligations (*waajibaat*) the abandonment of which renders a person sinful, but not a disbeliever. And there are also *mustahabbaat*

² And “action” here means to bring an action (*fi’l*) or to leave an action (*tark*) and both are treated as actions in the general sense.

(recommendations), the one who leaves them then his rank of perfection decreases, and alongside this he does not disbelieve and nor is he sinful. This is all clear.

End of the Shaikh's words.

COMMENTS

We recall from the previous lessons that Imaan consists of belief, speech and action, that it increases and decreases, and that a person cannot have completed and perfected Imaan except by bringing the speech of the heart, the actions of the heart, the speech of the tongue, and the actions of the limbs. We also recall that the Jahmiyyah held that by mere knowledge (ma'rifah) in one's heart, a person is complete and perfect in his faith, and likewise the Ash'ariyyah held that by mere assent (tasdeeq) in one's heart, a person is complete and perfect in his faith, and the Karraamiyyah held that by mere utterance of the tongue, a person is complete and perfect in his faith – and that to all of the above, actions are not from Imaan. And as for the Murji'at ul-Fuquhaa, then to them by mere assent in the heart and utterance upon the tongue, a person brought the required perfect and complete Imaan, and that this Imaan does not increase and decrease. So all of them agreed upon certain things and differed on certain things.

They all agreed that Imaan does not increase and decrease, and that the actions of the limbs are not from Imaan. Some of them considered Imaan to be a single entity, such as knowledge in the heart alone, or assent in the heart alone, or speech upon the tongue alone and so on. Some of the considered that a person could never become a disbeliever no matter what he did, so long as he had ma'rifah (knowledge) in the heart, such as the Jahmiyyah, and they are the most extreme of them all. Others said with mere tasdeeq, a person can attain perfect, complete Imaan, which are the Ash'ariyyah. Others said that if a person has tasdeeq and utters the Shahaadah and then no matter what sins he commits or what obligatory actions he leaves, that does not detract from his Imaan at all, rather Imaan stays constant, and is the same for all believers.

Similarly we saw others who deviated on the issues of Imaan, such as the Khawaari and the Mu'tazilah, who held that commission of major sins and leaving the obligatory duties is major kufr and expels from the religion. And this is because they held Imaan to be single entity on the limbs, if some of it was to go, then all of it will go.

So we have passed by all of that, and we have understood all of that, inshaa'allaah.

As for the current lesson, then we have observed that the heart has usool and furoo'. The furoo' of the heart are the waajibaat and mustahabbaat (or nawaafil). Likewise, the tongue has an asl, and waajibaat, and mustahabbaat (or nawaafil). Similarly the limbs, they have usool, waajibaat and mustahabbaat (or nawaafil). Leaving the asl (foundation, root) in any of these affairs is kufr (disbelief). Leaving the furoo' is a deficiency in Imaan, either a deficiency in the obligatory Imaan or the recommended Imaan. Leaving the waajibaat in any of these affairs is a deficiency in the obligatory perfection of Imaan, and renders one subject to punishment. Leaving the mustahabbaat is a deficiency in the recommended perfection of Imaan, and there is no sin upon it.

The obligatory Imaan (al-Imaan al-Waajib), in some aspects is the same for all people and in some aspects it is not. For example, the prayer and fasting is from the obligatory Imaan for

all people. Likewise, not committing zinaa, not drinking, not killing, not stealing, not backbiting, not gambling and the likes are all from the obligatory Imaan for all people.

However, giving zakaah might be from the obligatory Imaan for a person upon whom it is due, who has the wealth in order to give it. But as for the one who is poor, year in year out and has no wealth, then the zakah is not from the obligatory Imaan for him. Hence, his not giving it does not render him sinful, unlike the first person. The same can be said about Hajj. It maybe from the obligatory Imaan in certain situations and contexts for some people, but not for others – who do not have the means and the ability. Sometimes knowledge and absence of knowledge also play a role in determining whether something is from the obligatory Imaan for someone or not. Hence, with respect to obligatory Imaan, people vary concerning it, and also with respect to what amount of Imaan is obligatory upon them at any time. In other words, the obligatory Imaan that is required, varies amongst the people, and consists of those matters that are fixed (such as prayer, fasting, and avoiding the unlawful matters known such as zinaa, stealing and the likes) and those matters which may vary from individual to individual based upon ability and capacity and so on.

It is also important to note that if the waajibaat (obligations) of the actions of the heart (such as love, fear, hope, reliance and the likes) are not present, then that does not negate the presence of the asl (root, foundation) of the action itself – as we have seen. It is important to be aware of this as this will help us later on, when we discuss some issues of finer detail. And this has already been illustrated above with the heart's action of love (hubb), and the same can be said about fear (khawf) and reliance (tawakkul) and all of the actions of the heart.

To conclude this lesson, we will introduce some terms and definitions to help us conceptualise certain ideas. This will help us in grasping Lesson 5, which will actually summarise everything that we have learnt so far in one master diagram, inshaa'allaah. These terms are taken from the discussions of Shaikh ul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah and his writings on Imaan.

Al-Imaan al-Mutlaq (Absolute Imaan)

This refers to the sum whole of Imaan, the speech of the heart, all of the actions of the heart, the speech of the tongue and all the actions of the limbs. It refers to the sum total of all that which the Book and the Sunnah has brought of the righteous deeds whether internal or external. It is synonymous with the perfect, complete Imaan (al-Imaan al-Kaamil). Absolute Imaan is that which saves a person from actually going into Hellfire.

Mutlaq al-Imaan (Restricted Imaan)

This refers to that Imaan which saves a person from the Hellfire, after he has entered into it, and is in reference to the asl (root or foundation) of the Imaan, which is the assent in the heart, the heart's submission (idh'aan) and the speech of the tongue (i.e. the testimony).

Kamaal ul-Imaan, Al-Imaan al-Kaamil (Perfect, Complete Faith)

This is similar to Absolute (Imaan), referring to the sum total of the various components and aspects, or parts of Imaan, in their entirety.

Al-Imaan as-Saheeh (The Correct, Valid Imaan)

And this is synonymous to Restricted Imaan (Mutlaq ul-Imaan), and refers to that which enters a person into the fold of Imaan, that is Islaam.

Kamaal ul-Imaan al-Waajib (The Obligatory Perfection of Imaan)

This refers to that Imaan which is obligatory upon a person, and if he does not bring it then he is sinful. This can also vary from person to person. For example, a rich person, who has excess money, must give zakaah from it. If he does not then he has not brought the obligatory perfection of Imaan, and he is sinful. Another person, however, does not have money, and is poor. Hence, this obligatory perfection of Imaan, in this regard, is not due upon him and hence he is not sinful. The point being that the obligatory perfection of Imaan varies from person to person, some obligatory affairs are the same for all people, and yet other affairs vary from person to person based upon certain factors.

Kamaal ul-Imaan al-Mustahabb (The Recommended Perfection of Imaan)

This refers to that Imaan which adds perfection on top of the obligatory perfection of Imaan, and the various nawaafil (supererogatory) acts come under this. Any deficiency in this does not render a person sinful, but only makes him lose the higher rank of perfection.

These terms are sufficient at this stage inshaa'allaah. There are many sayings of Shaikh ul-Islaam which afford the meanings outlined in the terms used above. By way of example only, we shall mention some of these statements later inshaa'allaah. Anyhow for the time being, reflect upon these terms and understand what they mean, and we will probably recall them in the next lesson anyway.

End of Lesson 4, walhamdulillah. In Lesson 5, we will summarise everything we have learnt so far, in one master diagram. And this will help us to see and understand all of the issues pertaining to Imaan, inshaa'allaah, in the most clear of ways. And may the prayers and peace be upon Allaah's Messenger, his family, his companions and those who follow him upon Tawheed and the Sunnah till the affair is established.